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Spring 2020

### Advaita and Ethics in the "Bhagavad-Gita"

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#### Recommended Citation

Morrow, Matthew, "Advaita and Ethics in the "Bhagavad-Gita"" (2020). *Department of English Capstone Abstracts*. 45.

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ENGL 4890

21 June 2020

### Abstract

Barbara Stoler Miller's translation is not devoted to an Advaitic reading of the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, it functions well-enough, read comparatively with other primary sources, to secure this reading overall. Linguistic analysis demonstrates that there are pedagogical ramifications that arise from engagement with either Miller's translation or the Advaitic scholars and gurus, Swami Chinmayananda and Swami Gambhirananda. Specific keywords related to Hinduism, such as yoga, and accompanying syntactic structures are missing in several chapters and verses. This fact marginalizes students outside of Hindu or academic cultures, and it lessens their agency in engaging with Krishna's instructions. Because Swami Chinmayananda includes his own commentary and rhetoric, his translation of the *Gītā* is most fitting in comparison to Miller's. Chinmayananda's commentary demonstrates that Miller's translation positions her genre as effectively an informative or art-inspired, rather than an expository one. Gambhirananda's inclusion of the philosopher, Adi Shankaracharya's, is important for understanding the principles of Advaitic ontology and epistemology. Furthermore, in terms of contextualizing both Advaita and Ethics, Eliot Deutsch's and Nancy Bauer's works facilitate an ethical reading of the text that consider Advaitin epistemology, ontology, and a discussion on the applicability of normative, consequentialist, and emotivist ethics. While an Advaitic reading of the *Gītā* is not compulsory, as many different schools engage with the text, chapters eleven and eighteen demonstrate that Miller's translation complicates verses where Advaitic readings are not only inevitable but are

seemingly prescribed by Krishna. The inclusivity of Advaita makes the text approachable for a wider range of audiences, while Miller's academic focus takes too many liberties that cost uninitiated readers dearly in their understanding.